

October 1st, 2013



WILLIAMSTOWN COUNCIL ON AGING

# Harper Center Bulletin

## October 2013 Newsletter

OK pumpkins, here we are in the first full month of the fall and soon enough things will be rattling about in the darkness, and strange noises will be floating thru the autumn air. Ghosties and ghouls will be wandering around asking for handouts. The harvest will be in and we'll be hosting feasts driven by freshly harvested fall veggies all over town. Yum!

That, of course, is only a part of the Autumnal experience for us, there's the crisp air which leads to a solid nights

sleep. And the colors, wow.

The annual Fall Foliage Parade over in North Adams will on Sunday October 6th, and we know a bunch of peeps from here will go over. There are lots of people with parade memories and I wonder if anyone has recorded these for a future history program?

Speaking of parades, the annual Williamstown Elementary "Words Are Wonderful" parade is also coming; I don't have the actual date as this is written but we'll certainly let

you know!

Speaking of October events, aside from the first game of the World Series, and how about those Pittsburgh Pirates! Back in the playoffs after 20 years! The month has two holidays- Columbus Day and Halloween. We'll be closed on Monday October 14th-it's Columbus Day. Halloween? See page four!



## Laurel Ridge Senior Living Residence

One of the questions we're often asked is on the subject of assisted living. We have to tell people that the nearest options are a few miles away.

Apparently it's getting a little closer. On Thursday afternoon October 17th, Kimberly Babbs will be here at Harper to tell us about the Laurel Ridge Senior

Living Residence opening on Main Street in Lanesborough. New place, new options. Bring yourself in and we'll bring in fallish snacks.

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The Williamstown Council on Aging lives at the Harper Center, 118 Church Street in Williamstown. Open Monday through Friday, 8A to 4P and Sunday at 11 for lunch.

We've been providing quality services, programs, information and referral since 1966!

## Food banking.

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Periodically we have asked program participants coming in to bring a non-perishable food item as a donation to the local food pantry and we're always very pleased at the collection we manage to acquire. It just goes to show how aware we are of hunger issues in the community and reflects on our desire to help people who have been less fortunate than we have been.

Well, we are asking for another donation but on this particular occasion there will be a twist. On Tuesday October 1st, Carol DeMayo, the person behind the ongoing

effort at the program we know as the St Patrick/St Raphael food pantry. To be honest, while I have supported the program both personally and professionally, I don't know much about the actual nuts and bolts operation that is the day to day reality at a food pantry. I have heard Carol speaking on the topic informally here and there and I know that she has some tales to tell. Personally, I would like to know the history of the program, how it started, when and why-though I think we can figure out the why part. So come in and listen. She'll speak at 12:30, spaghetti and

meatballs, bread and salad at noon. Let us know if you're coming and while you're at it, bring a non perishable shelf stable gift too, if you can. It's so important!



## Kira

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About four years ago, during the course of a routine eye examination, my eye doc noted that there had been an increase in pressure in one of my eyes. Subsequent tests—and there are a whole battery of them, trust me on this, revealed that I have Glaucoma in one eye only. The treatment for me is a daily drop, some-

thing that begins with an “X” and is spelled, well, if you didn't know, it was a drug you might conclude that it was actually some mythical figure from antiquity. Daily repetition keeps the disease at bay and my sight from deteriorating. Our friend Kira from Interim Healthcare will be in the house at 1:00 on Thursday

afternoon, October 3rd, to discuss this very topic. Of course, there will be treats! Joins us!



## Java with Judy

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It's fall, temperatures have dropped, leaves are falling and there's a hint that a deep frost will soon drop upon us. The fall season is beautiful and many of us enjoy the color and the crisp nights. Java Judy will be here on October 23rd at 8:30 to talk about avoiding the fall, but not the

seasonal kind. She'll be here to address the always dangerous issue of falls anywhere—home, tub, front yard, just falls.

We all know someone who has fallen and that someone may even be ourselves. Falls hurt, they can cause everything

from surgery to unwanted nursing home stays. The key is avoiding the fall. That's what we'll be discussing—over breakfast. The menu will be posted along with the sign-up sheet next week so do join in the conversation—especially if you've “been there”.

## Alright, tell me a story...

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Everyone reads something at sometime. Many of us are avid book readers, others read newspapers or magazines. Personally I read everything. And there have times when I wish I had the time to actually write a novel, or maybe just a series of shorts. I think it would be kind of fun to see a final product in print don't you?

Anyway, our friend Ida Patella at Berkshire Housing has made arrangements for Christine Southworth to come here to Harper to talk with us about writing. She'll be conducting a workshop for us

which promises to be fun and will be an experience not only to remember, but to use.

OK, here's the skinny on this event;

Southworth is a nurse and a holistic nurse educator. She hails from Southampton and is the proprietor of Southworth Wellness. She specializes in workshops promoting wellness and fun. She'll be coming here initially to do a writing workshop with us—we'll start with a picture from somewhere-magazine, paper, whatever and we'll write stories about it for fun. This will

be a cool program. How many times have you looked at something and wondered about it? Let's create some tales and share them. Who knows, perhaps we'll put a short publications of sorts together!

So come in and bring your imaginations with you! Southworth's program will begin at 12:30 on Tuesday October 22nd. We'll be feasting first, how about chicken with rice and black beans at noon?



## Time to think about Medicare changes...

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It's that time of year again. Medicare open enrollment. Yup. Here we go.

If you're a Medicare Advantage plan subscriber, or have a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan you should have received information in the mail at least by the end of September. And we hope that you kept the information because it ex-

plains the changes in your plan for 2014. If no, we'll deal with it. Anyway, the annual open enrollment period is October 15th to December 7th. It means that you can make changes in your personal plans. And yes, our wonderful SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks can help you sort it all out. And, on the 29th at 12:30

Bonny DiTomaso from Elder Services will be here to give us a brief overview of the changes to help you in the process. Lunch first, pizza at noon, sausage, cheese and green pepper/mushroom. So sign up!



## A real art exhibit!

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Every Tuesday morning a group of folks get together in the main hall here at Harper to paint...in oils. Yup, a real painters group with a professional teacher to lend a hand or a helpful hint to enhance their craft. The group has been meeting with Jackie Toomey here for years, at

least since before I came to town, and while the participants sometimes change, our main hall is an art studio on Tuesday.

In the years I have worked in Harper, we've not had an official art show and we came to the conclusion that it was

about time we did. So on Sunday afternoon, October 20th the members of our painting salon will host an art showing, from 2:00 to 4:00 that afternoon. Of course it's open to all and refreshments will be served!



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Fall is a great time to look at stars, especially after the leaves have fallen. There are magnificent vistas to be seen in the heavens and you don't have to travel far to see them. Your front yard will generally do fine. If you're interested in a little different kind of sky show, the Williams College Planetarium will be offering free shows every Friday evening until December 6th at 8PM. These are fun and open to the public. They do ask that larger groups call for reservations and that number would be 597.2482. Ask for Michele Rech, she'll give you any information you need.

Backgammon players! We've someone who's interested in getting some folks together to play Backgammon. We'd be happy to host a group and we'll even provide a snack. Interested? Let us know!

Finally, October 31st is Halloween, a favorite holiday, and this year we'll celebrate with a cook out at noon! Everyone wear your costume! Let's party!

## Page Four News and Notes

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Serena Merrill, our wonderful foot care nurse, will be in the house on Tuesday October 15th to clip nails, massage aching feet and work on those calluses. That's the good news and we are accepting appointments for that date. Remember folks, it's first come, first serve so time is of the essence!

SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be here on Wednesday morning October 16th at 10:30 to answer any of those tricky insurance questions you may have. Medicare, Mass health, one insurance versus the other, the whole alphabet soup of the insurance business— she can help. Appointments are not required but suggested and Peg is available at other times as well— call the office at Harper, 458.8250, and we'll make arrangements. Remember that this is the season of open enrollment for all those Medicare plans and supplements. It's liable to get busy in here. We've actually scheduled an event with the SHINE folks to talk about this on October 29th— so start thinking about what you want to do with this, if anything.

The monthly blood pressure clinic sponsored by our friends at Sweetbrook will be on Tuesday October 8th at noon, right before the Friendship Club meeting. Our friend Sue will likely be bringing those cookies as a reward for braving the BP test...shall we call this "Magic Cookie Day"? And at my annual physical in mid September my BP was guess what? 120/58. How about that!

October's Brown Bag will arrive here at the Harper Center on Friday afternoon, October 25th around 2:00-ish. Brown Bag is a monthly offering of shelf stable goods and fruits and veggies in season delivered to you quite literally in a brown paper sack. There is a minimal application process but we can help you navigate that bit. Interested? Contact us at 458.8250 and we'll talk!

If you're good with numbers and know something about computers, we want you! We're approaching TAX SEASON again and the AARP are looking for a few good peeps interested in being volunteer Tax Aides. AARP tax counselors receive training and mentoring by experienced peers as you learn everything necessary to help others file their taxes. If you're interested in participating in this very worthy program let us know and we'll provide you with contact numbers so you can sign up!

